

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1914.—Copyright, 1914, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

NEW COMMANDER OF BRITISH NAVY IDOL OF THE FLEET

Lord Fisher Reorganized
England's Sea Forces
and Prepared Them for
Present War With Ger-
many.

WHEN England entered the war against Germany there was a general feeling that the British Admiralty Board should have the benefit of the counsel of John Arbuthnot Fisher, Baron Fisher of Kilverstone, Admiral of the Fleet at the time of his retirement in 1911. That con-
firmation has now been brought about by his appointment as First Sea Lord of the Admiralty to succeed Admiral Prince Louis of Battenberg, whose resignation was caused by popular clamor aroused by the fact that he is of German birth and parentage, though a British subject by naturalization.

That there should be a call for Lord Fisher's services at this crisis in the affairs of Great Britain is natural. It has been said that he stands in the same relation to the British navy that Lord Kitchener does to the army. But the comparison is not entirely adequate. It falls short of doing justice to the extent of Lord Fisher's achievements. More than to any other one man, the present efficiency of the British navy is due to him. He planned the ships, he trained the officers, he inspired the strategy which is now holding command of the North Sea. Even more, England for years looked to him to win a great naval victory some day against a foe, presumably Germany, which should crown him a second Nelson.

For a man who has done so much he is curiously unknown to his fellow countrymen. Entering the navy at 13, he did good service like many another officer, but attracted attention almost exclusively from his superiors. His great opportunity did not come until he was over 60. Then came a day when there was offered to him the highest prize of a sailor's ambition in time of peace—the position of First Sea Lord.

But even that honor he would only take on terms. He carried in his brain a full scheme of reorganization. He believed the training and the distribution of the navy to be perilously out of date. He had watched the change from wooden walls to iron citadels packed with tremendous and exquisite machinery. Yet there had been no fundamental change since Nelson's time in the method of training officers for their profession.

There had been a revolution in England's political relations, and it was clear to him that the struggle of life and death in the future would be fought in the North Sea and no other where. Yet England's fleets were still organized as though the Mediterranean would be, as in the eighteenth century, the chief scene of crisis. British ships were stationed anywhere but where they would probably have to fight.

Sir John Fisher—as he was then; his creation as first Baron Fisher of Kilverstone dates from 1909—clearly stated his intentions. They were approved. He went into the Admiralty to carry them out. His activities were revolutionary though constructive. He was denounced for the sheer daring and resolution of the changes he introduced. But he was commissioned from the outset to effect them. That was what he was there for. To the foreign mind he appeared like nothing so much as an ornamental torpedo waiting for its war need to be fixed on it.

And what did he accomplish? At Osborne he trained the officers of to-day to handle the grim machines which have superseded forever the old vision of masts and sails. He vastly increased efficiency while reducing expense. He struck out of the estimates every penny which did not yield real fighting value. He mercilessly scrapped scores of weak vessels that could neither attack nor run. He transferred the men to real fighting ships. He created with the inspiration of nothing less than genius the system of nucleus crews, by which every ship in the reserve can be mobilized for war in a few hours. Above all, he swung the whole fleet, as it were, clean round to face the tasks of the future.

He recognized that in the twentieth century as in the seventeenth, the British Empire will be saved or lost not in the Mediterranean but in the North Sea. Quietly he massed British strength in the narrow seas until, in Admiral Mahan's words, "36 per cent. of the British battleship strength was concentrated in or near home waters."

When Fisher was appointed First Sea Lord in 1904 a Unionist Government was in power, with Lord Selborne as First Lord of the Admiralty. Within two months Fisher's influence was evidenced by Lord Selborne's issue of a memorandum and circular letter dealing in drastic fashion with the distribution and mobilization of the fleet. Existing arrangements were cancelled and the effective war fleet divided into two, one in commission at sea and the other in commission in reserve.

Only a month later Fisher made his next departure, which was of a kind more calculated to attract general attention. He then showed that his practical, as apart from his strategic, policy was to scrap every naval vessel that was not absolutely up to date. In the first three months of 1905 no fewer than 120 of such vessels were removed from the ports to mooring stations round the coast as obsolescence.

All his life he had been a hard worker and he was untiring at the Admiralty. He was constantly planning and preparing for the war which has now come. In a measure he is the Von Moltke of the British navy, and when the storm broke the men and ships of England were, thanks to his work of organization, as ready for war as the German soldiers were in 1870. His knowledge of naval affairs was all embracing. He knew where each ship was and all about it, whether the commander was a good officer, whether he drank, whether he was a fop, whether he was liked by his crew—in fact everything about him.

"Confound him!" said an officer, who served under him in the West Indies, "I believe he could tell you the exact



Lord Fisher of Kilverstone, G. C. B., O. M.

number of cocktails I drink every time I go ashore."

To this encyclopedic knowledge is joined the faculty of prompt action and utter fearlessness. He proved his courage over and over again in the Crimean war, the China war of 1859-60 and the bombardment of Alexandria.

Lord Fisher has been described as the one man in the British navy who always holds his tongue. In a career of over forty years he has never spoken or written a word for publication; he has never been guilty of the slightest indiscretion. In these days of garrulous generals and argumentative admirals that is a record worth having.

This strong, silent man has a horror of notoriety. This trait in his character made it impossible for him to get along amicably with Lord Charles Beresford when the latter was his second in command of the Mediterranean fleet some years ago. Lord Charles is a fine sailor, but Fisher regarded him as a leaky vessel, incurably fond of talking when he ought to hold his tongue.

As one of his fellow officers has remarked, Lord Fisher rose "by dint of sheer brain power, continuity of purpose, clear sightedness and conspicuous ability to the position he now holds." The son of an obscure man, he has attained the highest rank in the service, where aristocratic influence counts for much.

The strangest thing about this man who bears upon his shoulders much of the weight of the British Empire is that he is not an Englishman at all in the strict sense of the word. His father was a Captain in the Seventy-eighth Highlanders, who settled in Ceylon and his mother was a Singhalese woman of high rank. Thus he has a strain of Oriental blood in his veins.

It shows very slightly in his face; only persons who have lived in the East are able to detect it. In countenance Admiral Fisher shows the characteristics of a bulldog, and he has that simple, bluff, hearty manner which is associated with the typical John Bull.

Sometimes his subordinate and foreign diplomatists with whom he has had to do have been deceived by this manner into thinking him an innocent, guileless sailorman with plenty of pluck but no brains. In every case they discovered too late that a touch of Oriental subtlety was grafted on Anglo-Saxon directness and iron will and that Fisher had been playing them with Asiatic craft.

He was one of Great Britain's representatives at the Hague peace conference. One who was present says that nobody made a greater impression than he upon the assembled diplomatists of the great Powers.

He holds the opinion that humane warfare is both foolish and cruel and he advanced that opinion at the conference with consummate skill.

"When you have to wring a chicken's neck," he said, "all you think about is wringing it quickly. You don't give the chicken intervals for refreshment and recuperation. It should be the same with warfare."

Lord Fisher has never hesitated to say that any war he may have to make will be hell. He has a bitter hatred of submarine vessels and years ago was

quoted as saying that if he caught the crew of a hostile submarine in time of war he would string them up to the yardarm, even if he had to face a court-martial afterward.

He showed the sternness of his nature after the bombardment of Alexandria in 1882. As Captain of the Indefatigable he had the task of organizing a police force and repressing disorder and looting after the capture of the city. He shot the guilty on sight and restored order in a few hours.

Some of his intimate friends, even officers of his own ship, were caught with looted goods. They begged in vain for mercy. He had all of them court-martialed and severely punished.

Admiral Fisher's subordinates respected him, but did not love him. He worked them too hard for that and was too quick to detect their faults. He himself toiled from 5 o'clock in the morning until 9 at night, and expected everybody to do the same. Men who have served under him are apt to curse whenever his name is mentioned.

Fisher knows this and takes a sardonic pleasure in it. He is fond of telling the story of an old boatswain who served under him in several ships.

The boatswain eventually retired on pension and Fisher paid him a visit at his country cottage in Devonshire. He noticed a man servant about the place who seemed to have nothing to do, and asked his host:

"What on earth do you want him for?"

"Well, sir," said the boatswain, "he has to call me every morning at 5 o'clock and say: 'Admiral wants to see you, sir.' I roll over on the other side of the bed and reply: 'Tell the Admiral to go to the devil.' Then I go to sleep again, feeling good."

"This happens half a dozen times a day, and I feel better every time. I've been waiting for it for twenty years."

"His will is iron," said one of his Mediterranean officers, "and his nerves are Harveyized Krupp steel."

Several years ago he was at Lisbon with a squadron. Relations were strained between Germany and England.

Just before the English ships left a German fleet of twice the strength entered the harbor with the idea of impressing the Portuguese, and drew up in double line off the town. Fisher exchanged salutes, and then led his vessels out of the harbor at full speed between the two German lines, with only twenty or thirty yards clear on either side.

It was a maneuver that might have wrecked a dozen ships, and only a man of iron nerve could have carried it out successfully. But he had trained his squadron well. Not a single vessel swerved a yard from the wake of his flagship. Amazed at his daring, the Germans cheered as he passed by their ships.

Stern toward men, he is pleasant to women. He never went into port if he could help it, without giving a ball on his flagship. He was a great favorite with Queen Victoria and was deeply attached to her.

When the French Admiral Gervais visited Portsmouth some years ago with his fleet Fisher was told off by the Ad-

miralty to do the honors to him. The Queen called him to Osborne and said:

"Sir John, we have sent for you especially to ask you to be very nice to Admiral Gervais, as he was so kind to us when we were recently at Chmiez."

"Madam," gallantly replied the Admiral, "I will even kiss him if your Majesty wishes it."

Notwithstanding this expression of amiability, Lord Fisher used to be averse to alliances, especially maritime alliances. He took the ground that co-operation with a friendly fleet at sea in war time was inadvisable, since "you cannot shoot a friendly Admiral for ignorance or negligence."

He married a clergyman's daughter, and possesses an extraordinary stock of scriptural quotations, which he uses to emphasize his arguments.

Lord Fisher has paid only one visit to America and then stayed exactly a week. That was four years ago. But he is remotely connected with this country, because on that visit he came to attend the wedding of his son to Miss Jane Morgan, daughter of Randall Morgan of Philadelphia.

The son, Cecil Vavasour-Fisher, assumed the name of Vavasour as one of the conditions of an inheritance of \$2,000,000. As a naval lieutenant he was instructed to carry out some experiments with a new invention in connection with quick firing guns, and the inventor, Josiah Vavasour, one of the directors of the firm of Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., the English gun-makers, took a fancy to him. The friendship thus begun ended in Mr. Vavasour's leaving him the \$2,000,000 besides certain manors on condition that he adopt the name and arms of Vavasour. It may be added that Mrs. Vavasour-Fisher qualified herself to be the wife of a naval officer and the daughter-in-law of the head of the British navy by holding a master mariner's certificate to sail her own yacht, for which she passed the usual examination.

At the time of his visit here Admiral Fisher expressed the opinion that the coming thing in navigation was the oil engine and that aeroplanes would be valuable in matters of naval reconnaissance and despatch. And that was about all the reporters could get him to say about naval matters.

As for personal characteristics, it has been said that it would tax Mr. Sargent to paint him. His profile, like that of most born fighters, juts clean out from forehead to chin, like the bow of a battleship. There is a certain force of expression about it which recalls the "hammer and tongs" captain in Marryat's ballad.

His figure is of middle size and active and if you passed him in the street without knowing him you would be compelled to look at him twice. His talk is full of the unexpected, yet revealing phrases which light up a subject with flashes of conversational lightning. He is as irresistible in anecdote as in energy. Once when asked what was his favorite text he replied instantly, "And there shall be no more sea."

His motto throughout his career has been that "the frontiers of England are the coasts of the enemy."

BROOKLYN ADVERTISEMENTS. FREDERICK LOESER & CO. BROOKLYN ADVERTISEMENTS.
Fulton Street Bond Street *Frederick Loeser & Co.* Livingston St. Elm Place
BROOKLYN - NEW YORK

Beautiful Colored Satin Messalines

\$1 Quality : : Yard Wide : : 75c

IT IS AN EXQUISITE SILK. It is the most fashionable weave. It is ready—not in an indifferent color range as might be expected at reduced price, but in

ABSOLUTELY PERFECT VARIETY OF DAY AND EVENING SHADES

These include white, ivory, cream, flesh, light and rose pinks, ciel blue, mais, orchid, nile, lilac, old rose, new tan, biscuit, gold, leather, nut brown, brown, tete-de-negre, plum, taupe, dark gray, Copenhagen, Delft, peon, king blue, emerald, myrtle, seven shades of navy, black. All silk, yard wide—a record value at 75c a yard.

Extra Waist Sales

Blouses, \$1.98; Values to \$5

Fashionably made of satin in the new shades of blue, brown, etc., and of chiffon over net foundations in dark and light colors. Others at this price are made of black messaline, new designs. There is also a great variety of lace and crepe de chine Waists in this collection that were recently \$5 in price. None C. O. D. No mail or telephone orders.

Blouses, \$2.98; Values \$4 to \$5

Several models of the new sleeveless velvet Basques, very smartly cut and attractively trimmed with the new collars. One of crepe de chine in new shades and white is hand embroidered and hem-stitched. (None C. O. D.; no mail or telephone orders.) Other Waists of messaline, of Roman striped silks, of crepe de chine with lace sleeves, of black peau de soie, messaline, etc. A great variety of black Waists.

26 Nearseal Fur Coats at \$49 Each

Values Up to \$75

TO APPRECIATE these Fur Coats at their true values you should see them. Nearseal may be either a very fine or a very shoddy Fur. In this case it has nearly the lustre of the real seal and is wonderfully warm and light. The Coats, too, are made in generous sizes and with the very closest attention to style.

This is an opportunity worth any woman's attention. Not soon will equally fine Coats be seen at a price so small as \$49. They are 40 and 42 inches long, lined with broad satin, and while some are plain, others have fitch, ermine, chinchilla squirrel or civet collars.

Special : : \$45 Black Fox Set at \$25

A special value for tomorrow. Extra long, thick fur, made in a very large pillow Muff and wide, handsome animal shaped Scarf.

Second Floor.

November Opens With a Record Series of Underpriced Sales at Loeser's.

Men's Suits and Overcoats, \$15. For Values to \$22.

Men's Suits and Overcoats, \$19.50. For Values to \$30.

\$1 to \$6 Nottingham Lace Curtains, 59c. to \$3.75.

Extraordinary Sale of Women's Coats, Suits and Dresses at \$15.

Afternoon and Evening Dresses at \$35. Values to \$75.

Women's \$15 Serge Dresses at \$7.50.

Women's \$1.50 French Kid Gloves at 98c.

Christmas Sale of Oil Paintings at Reduced Prices.

Innovation Wardrobe Trunks at \$17, \$28 and \$40.

Record Values in Men's, Women's and Children's Underwear.

Women's 25c. and 50c. Stockings at 15c. a Pair.

Women's 15c. and 25c. Stockings, 3 Pairs for 25c.

Men's 25c. and 35c. Socks, 15c. Pair.

Women's 35c. to \$2 Silk Stockings, 25c. to \$1.40.

Men's 25c. to \$3 Thread Silk Socks, 15c. to \$1.19.

\$15 to \$200 Small and Medium Oriental Rugs, \$9.50 to \$125.

\$140 to \$2,100 Carpet Size Oriental Rugs, \$75 to \$1,350.

\$1.50 to \$2.50 New Dress Goods at \$1 a Yard.

\$4 Cut Glass Celery Trays at \$1.50.

\$8 Cut Glass Bowls for \$2.98.

Loom Ends of Fine Ribbons at 5c., 10c. and 15c. Yard.

49c. to \$4 Beautiful Laces at 10c. to 98c. Yard.

Sale of Untrimmed Velvet Hats at 39c.

Trimmed Hats Special at \$1.98 to \$5.

\$6 to \$12 Brocaded Velvets at \$3 Yard.

Hand Embroidered Table Squares and Scarfs at \$1.19 to \$2.25.

\$3.75 to \$5 Nemo Corsets at \$2.

\$3.50 and \$4.50 German Silver Mesh Bags, \$2.50 and \$2.98.

\$3 Comfortables at \$1.98. Main Floor Table.

Women's \$5 Shoes for \$3.35.

Solid Gold Jewelry for Half Price and Less.

Wonderful Chance to Buy A New Piano or Player-Piano

Instruments secured through the retirement of a maker whose failure was due to the fact that he made too fine a Piano for his moderate prices.

Savings of \$50 to \$85 on Instruments

Worth \$100 More Than Their Former Prices

The estimate of their worth is based on the critical opinion of most experienced judges who know that these Pianos and Player-pianos in scale, action, case and finish are equal to those ordinarily sold for \$350 to \$650. Yet here you can secure

Upright Pianos, \$200 to \$235 Player-pianos, \$365 to \$425

There are Player-pianos and Upright Pianos. All are of the very latest designs and are in new style mahogany cases. No finer Pianos or Player-pianos have ever been turned out at the full prices; they will satisfy the most critical in both appearance and musical excellence.

Choose on Your Own Terms Within Reason

Select the instrument which appeals to you and arrange your own terms of payment—the sum you wish to pay down and the sums to be paid monthly. Unless your plan is beyond the bounds of what we consider good business we will accept it.

\$450 Player-pianos	(Worth \$550), at \$365
\$450 Player-pianos	(Worth \$550), at \$385
\$450 Player-pianos	(Worth \$550), at \$395
\$495 Player-pianos	(Worth \$595), at \$425
\$250 Upright Pianos	(Worth \$350), at \$200
\$300 Upright Pianos	(Worth \$400), at \$235

Fourth Floor.